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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/AGS - VIKMANIS-KELLER

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SUBJECT: LONDON BOMBINGS: AUSTRIANS EXPRESS SOLIDARITY:
"EUROPE WILL NOT BE INTIMIDATED"

1. Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel has declared Austria's solidarity for the United Kingdom and sympathy for the victims of the July 7 bombings in London. "Europe will not be intimidated. It will close ranks," he declared. President Heinz Fischer expressed shock and outrage, calling the attacks "despicable crimes the international community has to act against together." Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik said Austria would consult with the British on "how to support our British partners," and announced that the government was dispatching TDY assistance to its Embassy in London. The opposition was equally forthright: Social Democratic Party chairman Alfred Gusenbauer said, "all democracies in and outside of Europe are called upon to drive back and fight this terror against innocent people." Austria's Islamic Community also issued a statement strongly condemning the attack.

2. In addition to sympathy and solidarity, much of the Austrian reaction focussed on whether Austria is vulnerable to similar attacks. Interior Minister Liese Prokop announced heightened security, both in general and in support of British facilities. An Interior Ministry spokesperson said that there is no immediate threat in Austria, but noted "a mid-term threat from radical Islamists living in Austria, who are interested in Jihadism and might be motivated to carry out attacks in and outside of Austria."
Brown